DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 256 843 UD 024 214

TITLE	Education for a New Illinois: The Public Schools in a Changing Economy.
INSTITUTION	Illinois Project for School Reform, Chicago, IL.
SPONS AGENCY	Chicago United, IL.; Roosevelt Center for American Policy Studies, Chicago, IL.
PUB DATE	Feb 85
NOTE	47p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Standards; Community Involvement; *Community Role; *Curriculum Development; *Delivery Systems; Economic Change; Educational Administration; *Educational Change; Educational Finance; Elementary Secondary Education; Public Schools; *School Business Relationship; School District Autonomy; School Districts; Teacher Improvement; Teacher Motivation; *Teacher Role
IDENTIFIERS	*Illinois

ABSTRACT

Recommendations arising from the Illinois Project for School Reform are outlined in this document. First, the problem of declining academic standards is addressed and it is recommended that new curricula and rigorous standards be adopted. Local districts are urged to adopt a core curriculum, a competencies curriculum, or an integrated themes curriculum. Second, the problem of education as a profession in decline is set forth and strategies for ensuring higher standards and greater rewards and opportunities for teachers are recommended. Third, the delivery of educational services is looked at and it is argued that schools have become isolated from the community and that educational innovation has been stifled because schools now have too many responsibilities. It is recommended that new ideas be infused, such as: (1) flexibility in the delivery of educational services; (2) involving the larger community; and (3) streamlining the educational bureaucracy. The fourth section notes that schools have failed to keep pace with rapid economic changes and urges that this be remedied by building alliances between education and business. This is followed by a discussion of dwindling support for public schools and it is recommended that the community be given a stake in public education. And finally, suggestions are made for funding the recommendations. Appendices describe the process by which the recommendations were developed and list financial contributors and consultants. (RDN)

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The Public Schools in a Changing Economy

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THE ILLINOIS PROJECT FOR SCHOOL REFORM

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A Joint Project of
Chicago United and The Roosevelt Center for American Policy Studies

THE ILLINOIS PROJECT FOR SCHOOL REFORM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Illinois Project for School Reform has benefited greatly from the contribution of the statewide advisory committee listed below. This group includes representatives of Illinois' principal educational, business, labor and civic organizations and of the staffs of leading elected officials concerned with public education in Illinois. The committee has functioned as a board of directors for the project, planning its conduct and reviewing its actions and recommendations.

While there is diversity of viewpoints among committee members in regard to specific recommedations contained in this report, all members are in firm agreement that:

- Illinois' public schools must and can be improved.

- The prospects for such improvement are enhanced by the kind of open and broad-based public involvement process initiated by this project.

A faithful attempt has been made to capture the ideas of all participants in the Illinois Project for School Reform and each participant has had the opportunity to review and comment on these recommendations. Since all views cannot possibly be reflected in this report, however, the advisory panel and the project staff must take final responsibility for its content.

Active association with the project by members of the advisory committee does not imply endorsement by each of them of every prescription and strategy advanced in the report. In some instances, individual panelists may disagree with certain recommendations and will in time and in their own ways make their views known.

Committee members *are* unanimous in their agreement that the project has made a vital contribution to the process of educational reform in Illinois by fostering full, open and informed debate on these issues. The advisory committee and project staff join in encouraging all who care about the public schools to weigh the report's recommendations.

Aspira, Inc.
Chicago Urban League
Civic Federation of Chicago
Governor of Illinois, James Thompson
Illinois Association of School Administrators
Illinois Association of School Boards
Illinois Congress of Parents and Teachers
Illinois Education Association
Illinois Farm Bureau
Illinois Federation of Teachers
Illinois League of Women Voters
Illinois State Board of Education
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PREFACE

Faced with a new economic era in Illinois, the privately funded Illinois Project for School Reform was launched a year ago to seek innovative directions for the public schools.

The project, sponsored jointly by the Roosevelt Center for American Policy Studies and Chicago United, tackled fundamental questions: What should be taught in the schools and learned by students? Who should or shouldn't teach? What are the most effective methods of delivering educational services? What can businesses do to help schools fulfill their mission? How can we revive and maintain support for public education? And what will needed reform cost and how should we pay for it?

Profound changes in the way we approach education are essential and thus the recommendations contained here are characterized by a number of key points:

While the state has a leadership responsibility in education, the major emphasis of the report is on the RESTORATION OF LOCAL CONTROL OF SCHOOLS.

- While the state has a leadership responsibility in education, the major emphasis of the report is on the *RESTORATION OF LOCAL CONTROL OF SCHOOLS.*

- "Band-aid" and quick-fix solutions are rejected in favor of enduring structural reforms which will provide a basis for school renewal long after the current interest in educational reform has waned.

- More money for schools is recommended, but equally important is the recognition of the need to encourage risk-taking to infuse the schools with new energy and creativity.

- Strong emphasis is given to the need to create structures and mechanisms for teachers to play a more central role in guiding the schools as *partners* with administrators and school boards.

- The principle of providing local school districts choices and options in a large and diverse state such as Illinois is a consistent and important theme of the report.

- Widespread reform can be encouraged through a careful monitoring of more limited "pilot" programs.

The recommendations, which are the result of a grassroots process that involved thousands of Illinois citizens,* have as their base the fundamental belief that when given information and an opportunity people can be trusted to make sound decisions. Many of the recommendations are of an "enabling" or "empowering" nature; that is, they seek to create vehicles, mechanisms, incentives and opportunities for citizens at the local level to develop the school system and programs they believe best for their children.

Many of the recommendations are of an . . . "empowering" nature . . . they seek to create vehicles, mechanisms, incentives and opportunities for citizens at the local level to develop the school system . . . they believe best for their children.

We hope our state's educational and political leaders will embrace the substance and spirit of this report and provide the leadership essential for the quality schools needed for a new era in Illinois. But the spirit of leadership that we call for is not that which attempts to do things for and to people. Rather, the leadership we believe is necessary is of the kind Emerson advocated over a century ago when he asked for leaders who do not do things for us, but rather those who restore our faith in our own individual capacities to make a difference, govern our institutions and control our own destinies.

Michael J. Bakalis
Executive Director
The Illinois Project for School Reform

*See appendix for a full description of the process by which the recommendations were developed.

INTRODUCTION

THE NEW ILLINOIS

Illinois is at an economic crossroads.

An old economic era is passing and a new one is being born in its place. The industrial age is giving way to a knowledge, service and high-technology economy which will have a profound effect on institutions and society.

The economy is changing in three fundamental ways. The first is the continuing shift to a "service" economy from a manufacturing of "goods" economy. (The service sector of the economy has been defined as all output not derived from the goods-producing sectors — manufacturing, agriculture, construction and mining.)

An old economic era is passing and a new one is being born in its place. The industrial age is giving way to a knowledge, service and high-technology economy which will have a profound effect on institutions and society.

Nationally, service employment is growing and manufacturing employment is declining. Today the service sector generates three times as much income as goods-producing industries and has replaced goods production as the major economic activity of the labor force.

Just 20 percent of today's national work force is engaged in the production of goods, and estimates are that within the next 25 years as few as five percent of America's workers will be employed in such jobs. Such an employment shift would impact directly on at least 10 million persons currently in the work force.

Illinois is particularly susceptible to these economic tides. The Illinois Bureau of Employment Security projects a low rate of growth in wage and salary employment resulting from the "continuing declines in manufacturing employment and slowing expansion in non-manufacturing." By the end of the decade, only one in five Illinois workers will be engaged in manufacturing, while expanded job opportunities are projected in the non-manufacturing sector, particularly service, finance, real estate, insurance and retail trade. Farm employment is also expected to drop 16 percent during the decade.

A second major economic change is the decline in productivity. Despite the Great Depression, productivity rose 27 percent from the 1930's to 1948. From 1948 to 1973 productivity increases exceeded 80 percent. After 1973, however, the trend reversed and productivity decreased 1.7 percent.

The third change has been the transformation from a national to an international economy. Illinois, like the rest of the nation, sells its goods not only to Americans but to a global consumer market. Our state competes not only to bring American companies to Illinois, but also to attract multinational corporations as well.

These changes challenge our institutions. Some will remain unaffected, though they will be few in number. Some will simply die or wither away, memories or relics of a simpler time, testimony to their failure to adapt, adjust and renew themselves.

However, those institutions which successfully adapt to change will triumph by meeting the future rather than being enslaved by it. This is the choice facing the public schools.

The key among the variables which will make for a productive knowledge/service/information economy is human resource development.

The key among the variables which will make for a productive knowledge/service/information economy is *human* resource development. Capital, geography, natural resources and transportation are important. But the key is people — how we educate them and whether or not they have the capacity to be trained and retrained in an economy in which change is constant.

Therefore, the state or nation which recognizes the central importance of people, meets their needs and develops their potentials will lead the way. Schools and education, therefore, will play a more important role than ever. Education is the indispensible instrument for economic growth and successful competition in a world economy.

A new America and a new Illinois are taking shape. And the success of the new Illinois will depend in large measure on the revitalization of its schools. Education is no longer on the periphery of events. It has moved center stage.

STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM

THE PROBLEM: DECLINING ACADEMIC STANDARDS

An alarming decline in academic standards, documented in a series of recent studies of public education, threatens our prosperity and security.

Evidence of the threat abounds:

- Approximately 13 percent of our nation's high school seniors are functionally illiterate — incapable of filling out an employment application, understanding a bus schedule or following the directions on a prescription form.

- Science achievement scores are declining, and the verbal and mathematics scores on the College Board Scholastic Aptitude Test fell nearly 50 points each between 1963 and 1980.

- Business and military leaders spend millions annually on remedial reading, writing and math classes for their employees.

Clearly, we are failing to provide millions of young people with the basic skills needed to participate fully in our society.

The rigorous educational standards of a generation ago — requiring mastery of English and literature, mathematics and science, history and geography — have been replaced with a menu of optional courses and the promotion of students without regard to academic proficiency.

If we are "certifying as 'educated' a generation that is poorly prepared to read, write and compute," as suggested by a recent report on education,[1] then we must begin to challenge the conventional assumptions about educational policy in our nation and our state.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS: NEW CURRICULA AND RIGOROUS STANDARDS

A. New Curricula

1. *We recommend that both elementary and secondary school districts develop and implement INDIVIDUAL CURRICU-*

LUM PLANS, subject to approval by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). The ISBE should establish guidelines and standards, including learning outcomes, by which these plans would be evaluated. Curricular flexibility *within* districts should be allowed. Further, we strongly encourage local districts to adopt one of the following *three* plans:

a. Core Curriculum

Districts choosing this program commit to a core curriculum for *all* students. Electives are offered primarily in the junior and senior years of high school. The core curriculum for high school students is outlined below:[2]

Recommended Core Curriculum

English Writing (1½ years) Literature (1½ years) Speech (1 year)	4 years
Foreign Language	2 years
Mathematics	2 years
Computer Technology	½ year
Science Physical Science Biological Science	2 years
Social Science U.S. History World History Civics	3 years
Health and Physical Education	2 years
Art and Music	1 year
Seminar on Work	½ year
Community Service	½ year

The core curriculum represents a traditional and structured approach. It assumes that a general education program is appropriate for all students, whatever their academic ability and whatever their vocational future. It assumes that every child is capable of learning the core; however, it does not assume that the method of teaching the core will be the same for each student or that the depth and complexity of coverage will be identical.

The core curriculum embraces a series of ideas. Among them:

- The ability to communicate is fundamental for survival and success in today's world. Therefore, we recommend distributing the English requirement among writing, reading and oral communication.

- Literature, art and music are essential for a full and civilized life.

- Mathematics and science are basic to understanding the world in which we live and our ability to function adequately in it.

- Our illiteracy in the languages of other nations deprives our young people of full access to the rich cultures, literature and traditions of other lands. It also puts our nation at a competitive disadvantage in a global economy.

- In the workplace and in the home, the next generation will need a basic understanding of computer technology.

- Unless our citizens understand our heritage and the heritage of others in the world, and possess a fundamental grasp of how government works, our democracy cannot function.

- With every right there is an attendant responsibility. A requirement of community service will remind young people of their societal duties and will help ease their transition from school to the workforce.

- Students should have the opportunity to explore and examine firsthand career options and the world of business in order to understand employer expectations and employee responsibilities.

• The development of the body, like the development of the mind, is an important component of a total education. We do not believe, however, that the current four-year physical education requirement is justifiable. Young people are conscious of the need for physical fitness. Most would voluntarily choose more than the minimum requirement.

b. Competencies Curriculum

Districts choosing this approach would define and adopt scholastic goals for their students. School districts would structure a curriculum around those goals and devise competency tests to measure student performance.

Some sample competencies are listed below:

Reading	The ability to vary one's reading speed and method and one's purpose for reading according to the type of material.
Writing	The ability to write standard English sentences with correct sentence structure, verb forms, punctuation, capitalization, possessives, plural forms and other matters of mechanics — word choice and spelling.
Mathematics	The ability to perform the computation of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division using natural numbers, fractions, decimals and integers.
Reasoning	The ability to draw reasonable conclusions from information found in various sources, whether written, spoken, tabular or graphic, and to defend one's conclusions rationally.
Economics	The ability to understand personal economics and its relationship to the skills required for employment and advancement.[3]

c. Integrated Themes Curriculum

Districts choosing this option would set goals and organize curricula around broad themes requiring the use of a variety of intellectual skills. Three options are offered here for illustrative purposes. However, districts should be free to develop their own approaches.

Example (1): The Paideia Proposal suggests all curricula be devised on the basis of three themes:

a) Acquisition of organized knowledge

b) Development of intellectual skills

c) Enlarged understanding of ideas and values

Example (2): Another option could involve the following themes:

a) The development of the cosmos

b) The development of institutions

c) The development of culture and technology

Example (3): A third alternative could entail:

a) Interdisciplinary skill development

b) Interdisciplinary core curriculum

c) Practical applications of knowledge

The integrated themes curriculum is the most unique. It recognizes that an integration of academic disciplines — literature and history, science and geography, language and mathematics — can offer students insights that are frequently missing from the isolated study of individual disciplines.

The flexibility and capacity for innovation incorporated in these proposals reflect our strong belief that the most important skills a growing person can possess in the emerging economy are the ability to adapt and the capacity to learn. All curricula, regardless of their design, must foster these skills.

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We believe the skills and competencies fostered by these curriculum programs are the best guarantee that students will successfully make the transition from school to work or higher education.

A large and diverse state like Illinois should encourage local educators and citizens to create educational programs best suited to their own needs and goals. These plans must be created jointly by administrators, teachers and boards of education. The state must necessarily monitor progress and provide direction and technical assistance, but its true leadership role is to "empower" local school districts to lead themselves.

All existing state mandates, with the exception of special education, would be eliminated under the Individual Curriculum Plans. Local school districts should be able under these proposals to provide elective courses, now mandated statewide, which meet local educational needs.

A large and diverse state like Illinois should encourage local educators and citizens to create educational programs best suited to their own needs and goals. . . . The state must necessarily monitor progress and provide direction and technical assistance, but its true leadership role is to "empower" local school districts to lead themselves.

2. *We recommend that the General Assembly appropriate $1,000,000 for CURRICULUM PLANNING GRANTS, to provide technical assistance to school districts for the development of Individual Curriculum Plans.* These grants would be particularly appropriate for those districts adopting new and complex plans such as the competencies and integrated themes curricula.

B. Rigorous Standards

1. *We recommend that NO STUDENT BE PROMOTED WITHOUT DEMONSTRATING ACADEMIC PROFICIENCY.* A child who can neither read nor write, but who is nonetheless promoted from grade to grade, will one day discover that he lacks the skills to function in our society. We do that child no favor by practicing "social promotion" — an insidious policy that should be replaced with requirements of academic proficiency.[4]

A child who can neither read nor write, but who is nonetheless promoted from grade to grade, will one day discover that he lacks the skills to function in our society. We do that child no favor by practicing "social promotion."

2. *We recommend that ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE BE REWARDED.* Students will respond to academic challenges if they are rewarded for doing so. In North Carolina, students who exceed the core requirements are honored as "North Carolina Scholars," while California has appropriated $100,000 to enable seniors to compete for graduation honors based on achievement tests.

The Illinois Association of School Boards and the Illinois Association of School Administrators, in conjunction with local school districts, should organize an "academic olympics" in Illinois. Students would progress from the local to the state level, culminating in the selection of state "gold medal" winners in various academic categories. Final prizes could include four-year scholarships to one of our universities.

While we applaud the recently enacted "Merit Recognition Scholarship Program," we now encourage the General Assembly to begin funding this scholarship program, which will recognize academic achievement. Currently, the state is not awarding scholarships solely on academic merit.

We must have an educational system that rewards academic achievement and distinguishes between excellence and mediocrity.

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3. *We recommend that LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS CREATE AND ADMINISTER TESTS, BASED ON EACH DISTRICT'S LEARNING OBJECTIVES, to measure student performance at the 3rd, 6th, 8th and 10th grade levels, and that the results of such tests be reported to their communities.* The state should require that such testing and reporting be part of local districts' Individual Curriculum Plans.

THE EDUCATION PROFESSION

THE PROBLEM: EDUCATION IS A PROFESSION IN DECLINE

In 1983, the Commission on Excellence in Education reported that "not enough of the academically able students are being attracted to education; that teacher preparation programs need substantial improvement; that the professional working life of teachers is on the whole unacceptable; and that a serious shortage of teachers exists in key fields."

Teachers complain of stress and often leave the profession because of "burnout." Although many dedicated teachers remain, many feel dissatisfied, isolated and unappreciated.

The public is similarly disenchanted, according to national polls and a recent survey of Illinois citizens commissioned by the Illinois Project for School Reform. One-third of the respondents said they would prefer that their children not become public school teachers, a conclusion that seems to flow logically from other opinions expressed in the poll. A majority of those polled, for example, think teachers are underpaid, and a significant number think teachers are poorly trained and insufficiently interested or motivated.

Although the public is critical of the teaching profession, it also has sympathy for teachers and understands that poor pay, crowded classrooms, discipline problems, low expectations and poor teaching materials can make a tough job even tougher.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS: HIGHER STANDARDS AND GREATER REWARDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A. The Standards

1. *We recommend that the governing boards of the state's universities RAISE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS, beginning with freshmen entering college in the 1986-87 academic year.* All students enrolling in teacher education programs should have an ACT score of not less than 19 and an overall grade point average of 2.8 (A = 4.0) by their junior year in college. Each entrant should pass an examination, prepared by the Illinois State Board of Education and administered by the teacher preparation institutions, demonstrating the reading, writing and communication

skills of a college sophomore. A grade of D or F in student teaching, moreover, should disqualify students from certification. Although ineligible to teach, these students could still graduate from their colleges or universities. Such students should be able to petition the Illinois State Teacher Certification Board for an opportunity to try again for certification.

2. *We recommend a MANDATORY ONE-YEAR INTERNSHIP FOR PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS.* The Illinois State Teacher Certification Board should require a one-year internship prior to teacher certification. To determine if an intern is actually suited to the teaching profession, he should demonstrate proficiency in applying theoretical knowledge in the classroom. Interns should have full class loads, receive regular salaries and work under the guidance of certified "mentor" teachers. Based on the positive recommendations of his mentor and school principal, the intern teacher would qualify for full certification. A person denied certification would have the right to petition to the State Certification Board for review, based upon criteria established by the Board.

Because of the relatively small number of new teachers required in the immediate future, we have a unique opportunity to raise standards substantially while signaling to prospective teachers that more academically rigorous requirements are now expected.

At the same time, we must provide alternate graduation routes for students in teacher education programs who find they are unlikely to be successful teachers. Too often the university's only choice is to pass the student or deny graduation.

Because of the relatively small number of new teachers required in the immediate future, we have a unique opportunity to raise standards substantially while signaling to prospective teachers that more academically rigorous requirements are now expected.

3. *We recommend the establishment of REGIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS to upgrade the continuing education programs for teachers and administrators.* Professional Development Planning Councils, established by the Superintendents of the Educational Service Regions and comprised of the regional superintendent, four district superintendents and six teachers selected by the local teacher organizations, would establish guidelines and organize programs for administrator and teacher professional development. Such councils could foster inter-school visitations, exchanges of programs and personnel and generally promote a sharing of educational ideas.

4. *We recommend that the Illinois State Board of Education require local school districts to adopt PERSONNEL EVALUA-*

TION PLANS, which are developed jointly by teachers, administrators and school board members. To avoid the adversarial and often counterproductive nature of most teacher competency reviewing systems, we believe that all teacher and administrator evaluation plans should incorporate the principles of peer review and peer counseling.

The local plans should detail ways in which peer review can be combined with administrator evaluation to reward good teachers, counsel poorer ones and terminate bad teachers. All such plans should be jointly written by teachers, administrators and school board members in the district.

Since 1981, this type of program has been operating successfully in Toledo, Ohio. We believe school districts could use the Toledo Plan as a springboard for developing their own.

The ISBE should provide technical assistance to schools in developing personnel evaluation programs.

To avoid the adversarial and often counterproductive nature of most teacher competency reviewing systems, we believe that all teacher and administrator evaluation plans should incorporate the principles of peer review and peer counseling.

5. *We recommend that the Illinois State Teacher Certification Board create ALTERNATE ROUTES TO TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR CERTIFICATION.* Such a policy should consider previous work experience, special areas of expertise or the results of special proficiency examinations. This policy would allow exceptionally talented men and women to teach and would permit schools to recruit qualified personnel for specialized or unusual subject areas, such as art, music, math or the physical sciences.

Alternate routes to teacher and administrator certification would permit schools to recruit qualified personnel for specialized or unusual subject areas, such as art, music, math or the physical sciences.

6. *We recommend that the Illinois Board of Higher Education encourage state colleges and universities to CREATE PROGRAMS TO TRAIN BUSINESS PEOPLE WHO WANT TO TEACH IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.* Harvard University recently initiated such a program which does not simply waive certification requirements, but provides a flexible means for business people to achieve certification and training in pedagogy.

Allowing business people to teach could infuse the schools with new talent in all areas, but particularly in the increasingly important subjects of math and science. Many business people seeking mid-career changes or opting for early retirement could form a reservoir of talent from which the schools could draw.

If adopted, these recommendations could help alleviate the critical shortage of math and science teachers. Over 50 percent of the nation's newly employed math and science teachers in 1982 were considered unqualified and were teaching with emergency certificates, according to the National Academy of Sciences.

We advocate flexibility in certification, in part, because the relationship between formal certification and quality teaching has never been convincingly established. College teachers and teachers at private and parochial schools are not required by the state to be certified, yet few would argue that they are less qualified than teachers in public schools. While principles of pedagogy and child development are important to know, a more flexible and carefully monitored system would open the schools to talented people who are now unable to teach because of the current system's rigidity.

7. *We recommend that the General Assembly ABOLISH THE CHICAGO BOARD OF EXAMINERS.* The current division of teacher certification responsibilities between Chicago and the State Teacher Certification Board is wasteful and serves no clear educational purpose. Therefore, we recommend that all responsibilities for teacher certification be centralized in the Illinois State Teacher Certification Board.

B. The Rewards and The Opportunities

1. *We recommend that the General Assembly enact the QUALITY EDUCATION COMPENSATION ACT which would both gradually increase teacher salaries and lengthen the number of work weeks in teachers' contracts.* Under this proposal, interns and teachers with less than four years experience would receive a 10-month contract at a minimum $18,000 salary.[5]

Currently employed teachers with at least four years experience would have the *option* of moving immediately to a 12-month contract with the appropriate increases in their current annual salary. These contracts would also be phased in on the basis of teacher seniority, with one-fifth of the teaching force allowed to move to a 12-month contract each year for five consecutive years. The Illinois State Board of Education should provide the research, statistics and guidelines for administering this act. Any teacher could choose to remain on a 10-month contract.

An increase in teacher salaries must accompany the higher standards and certification requirements. Making entrance requirements more rigorous without raising salaries would provide little incentive for talented people to become teachers. And raising salaries without raising standards would attract too many individuals lacking the skills and professionalism higher salaries should demand.

The image and status of teachers will not improve as long as they are perceived as less than full-time employees who must "moonlight" to make ends meet. The public must recognize that teachers, like lawyers and doctors, are professionals and are no less so outside the classroom. Teachers have necessary work to complete in the summer months when school is not in session. Professional development activities, for example, could be more beneficial if concentrated in the summer. Teachers could also use the extra months to teach remedial education classes for students in need of special assistance, to design new curricula, tutor adults, participate in school districts' community outreach programs or use their special talents as educators in the private sector. Children who are currently in need of extra help and support would profit greatly from the option of additional school time in the summer months.

The image and status of teachers will not improve as long as they are perceived as less than full-time employees who must "moonlight" to make ends meet.

2. *We recommend creation of five CAREER LADDER PILOT SCHOOL DISTRICTS to operate for five years.*[6] The General Assembly should provide each pilot district with an initial planning grant of $25,000, with additional funds allocated over the five-year period.

These career ladder districts can establish tangible career goals for teachers and provide mechanisms for promotion. Just as teachers at colleges and universities begin as instructors and advance to assistant, associate and full professorships, so too might "career ladder district teachers" advance professionally through clearly established stages characterized by increased status and recognition as well as financial rewards.

Few people respect a profession easily entered or one where opportunities for advancement are limited. The formal goals provided by the career ladder districts and the attendant prestige that comes with achievement will help increase teachers' status. The teaching profession's reluctance to recognize achievement discourages talented people from entering the profession and encourages the most dynamic and ambitious of its members to leave for other occupations.

Few people respect a profession easily entered or one where opportunities for advancement are limited. The formal goals provided by the career ladder districts and the attendant prestige that comes with achievement will help increase teachers' status.

3. *We recommend that the General Assembly create an ILLINOIS EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY.* This institution would bring together the state's most outstanding university and public school administrators, faculty and business people to explore ways to improve schools. Models for teaching strategies, curriculum, school organization and teacher and administrator evaluations could be created in a

challenging atmosphere. The academy would test new ideas and provide high-quality professional development opportunities. These leaders could then return to their communities and apply their new knowledge and ideas to local school systems.

Admission to the academy would recognize individual excellence and confer honor on the participants.

The academy would particularly emphasize the need for cooperative efforts between the private sector and the educational community in the area of human resource development, with special emphasis on successful approaches to increasing motivation and productivity.[7]

THE DELIVERY OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

THE PROBLEM: OUR SOCIETY HAS TRANSFERRED TOO MANY RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE SCHOOLS. AS A RESULT, SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN ISOLATED FROM THE COMMUNITY AND EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION HAS BEEN STIFLED.

The notion that the school should be the primary educator of the young is a relatively new concept. Historically, the tasks of preparing children for adulthood were distributed throughout society. Such functions were shared by the school, the church and various community and social agencies. Once viewed as a family and community responsibility, education today is increasingly the sole province of the schools.

We believe the community should once again accept a large part of the responsibility for educating its youth. Greater community involvement will increase support for public education and foster flexibility and innovation in the educational process. We also believe the schools must explore new ways to use the time and place where children are educated.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS: AN INFUSION OF NEW IDEAS

In many ways, the real shortage in public schools is not money, but creativity. Too often we continue to do things simply because they have always been done. These recommendations seek to infuse our schools with new creative energy.

A. Flexibility in the Delivery of Educational Services

1. *We recommend that the Illinois State Board of Education allow local school districts to create INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL DELIVERY PLANS (IEDP).* These plans would provide for alteration of the school day, week or academic year for the achievement of specified educational goals.

One district, for example, could choose to operate with more hours per day, but a four-day week. Another could arrange half-day sessions in the school and half-day sessions in the community. Others could develop community contracts under which some

subjects, such as art, health or physical education, are taught by community members or local groups. Another school could choose to contain all educational activities on school premises but seek internal schedule variations, such as five, seven, nine or more periods of math, science, or reading per week; three periods of history; and two or three periods of physical education. And still other districts could see a need for early childhood education and submit a plan for children to begin school at age four, yet condense its high school program into three years. The potential variations are endless. We believe school districts should be free to make such choices in support of their educational goals.

Flexibility, the common thread among many of our recommendations, is represented in the IEDP concept. It imposes no single approach on all districts; rather, each district can be as traditional or as innovative as it desires. The IEDP concept is also intended to accommodate the special needs of all students. Such flexibility would be particularly useful in large urban school districts where the special needs of children might be more adequately addressed if such options were available. The state's sole function is to monitor and evaluate the soundness of the local approaches.

Flexibility, the common thread among many of our recommendations, is represented in the IEDP concept. It imposes no single approach on all districts; rather, each district can be as traditional or as innovative as it desires.

2. *To encourage the development and use of Individual Educational Delivery Plans we recommend that the General Assembly authorize 100 IEDP PLANNING GRANTS of $25,000 each.* School districts would submit proposals to the Illinois State Board of Education on a competitive basis. Although districts could apply for IEDP status without such grants, these funds would be awarded to districts demonstrating creativity and a special interest in working with the local community.

3. *We recommend that the Illinois State Board of Education develop and that local districts administer ACADEMICALLY RIGOROUS PROFICIENCY EXAMS for use at the high school level.* At specified times during the year, the tests would be offered to students. Students who successfully pass the exams would be awarded high school credit in lieu of taking certain courses. The exams should require high standards of achievement and confer prestige on those who pass them, allowing especially talented students to move on to more advanced courses. The ISBE should establish limits on the number of credits a student could earn through this procedure.

B. Involving the Larger Community

1. *We recommend that the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois State Board of Higher Education encourage and FORMALIZE PROGRAM PLANNING BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES AND HIGH SCHOOLS.* The Boards should appoint regional councils[8] to negotiate compacts between school districts and universities for the purpose of improving school curricula, teacher training and school management skills and providing academic programs for gifted students.

2. *We recommend that the Illinois State Board of Education earmark $100,000 of currently budgeted funds for the establishment of the EDUCATIONAL PRIVATIZATION PROJECT.* This project would go beyond creating cooperative relationships between schools and communities. It would determine whether certain services now provided by public schools could be more effectively delivered by the private sector or other public agencies. A local restaurant, for example, might provide food service more efficiently, a local hospital might have better resources for the teaching of health or a local museum might teach art more effectively and at less cost than the school itself.

The Privatization Project would go beyond creating cooperative relationships between schools and communities. It would determine whether certain services now provided by public schools could be more effectively delivered by the private sector or other public agencies.

The ISBE should select six to ten school districts to participate for a three-year test period. Pilot grants of $10,000 to $12,000 should be awarded to each district for project planning. Upon completion, each participating district would be required to submit a description and evaluation of its effort to the ISBE, which would then determine whether the district's plan should be expanded on a voluntary basis to more districts.

3. *We recommend that each Educational Service Region superintendent develop plans for creation of BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CENTERS.* These centers would be open to children of all residents of the service region and would be authorized to charge tuition. The nature of the centers' programs, hours and tuition would be established by advisory councils appointed by regional superintendents.

Before and After School Centers address a series of community concerns. Many communities want the services these centers could provide, but lack the resources to provide them on their own. In addition, the large number of working couples and single parents would welcome safe, educationally-supportive environments for their children.

These centers need not be limited to one particular age group. They would provide opportunities for tutorial work, socialization and recreation. Such a program could attract taxpayers who have chosen to send their children to private or parochial schools.[9] These centers would also help break down the isolation of schools from their communities.

C. Streamlining the Educational Bureaucracy

A school's ability to experiment and innovate is often limited by size, physical characteristics and level of efficiency. The efficiency of the state's educational bureaucracy similarly determines much of its flexibility and openness to creativity and change. Therefore, we offer several recommendations designed to streamline the educational organization.

1. *We recommend that the General Assembly REQUIRE ALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO OPERATE AS UNIT DISTRICTS — districts that combine elementary and secondary schools.* Many of Illinois' current school districts are too small and inefficient. The Illinois State Board of Education should define minimum educational standards which every district, regardless of its organization, must satisfy. These criteria should relate not only to the physical characteristics of the school plant, but also to the nature and quality of the educational program.

Districts should be allowed to petition to the ISBE for exemption from such consolidation if they can demonstrate their ability to deliver quality educational services as currently organized. In such cases, the ISBE should have final jurisdiction.

We do not assume that all small districts are undesirable or that large districts are preferable. In some cases, unit districts may be too large and should be divided into smaller entities. For example, we believe that one unit district in particular — Chicago — may not be able to provide quality services as currently organized. In some cases, current unit districts may not be able to ensure a quality program and further reorganization may be appropriate. The standard in each case must be whether or not the district, as currently organized, can deliver a quality educational program.

We do not assume that all small districts are undesirable or that large districts are preferable. The standard in each case must be whether or not the district, as currently organized, can deliver a quality education program.

2. *We recommend the creation of LOCAL SCHOOL BUILDING COUNCILS in our larger urban school districts.* The efficient delivery of educational services, the accountability of school personnel and the access of parents to school decision-making are difficult in large districts. In the interest of restoring access and accountability, we believe local building councils comprised of parents and other community members should be established.

Such councils should have advisory responsibilities in areas of program and curriculum and should be allotted financial resources to accomplish their goals.

Ultimately what happens at the school building level is of the most fundamental importance in the education of a child, and in our largest urban districts the opportunity for an individual parent to have an impact on the system is currently minimal.

Ultimately what happens at the school building level is of the most fundamental importance in the education of a child, and in our largest urban districts the opportunity for an individual parent to have an impact on the system is currently minimal.

3. *We recommend that the General Assembly REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE ILLINOIS BOARD OF EDUCATION from 17 to 9 members.* The board is too large to function as an effective educational governing body. The effectiveness of the Illinois State Board of Education has been increasingly questioned by the legislature and educational community. Unless changes are made, the sentiment to eliminate the board may escalate. We make this recommendation with the hope of strengthening the leadership role of the state board. Indeed, many of our recommendations, such as the ISBE Proficiency Exams, give the state board *more* leadership responsibilities.

4. *We recommend that the General Assembly create the GOVERNOR'S EDUCATION COORDINATING COUNCIL.* This council would serve as a forum to bring together the major state educational policymakers for more careful planning and coordination of educational curricula and fiscal issues affecting all levels — from the elementary grades through the university level. This council would also develop strategies for reducing waste, duplication and inefficiency in the delivery of educational services in Illinois. The council would consist of 11 members and would be chaired by the governor.[10]

SCHOOL/BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

THE PROBLEM: OUR SCHOOLS HAVE FAILED TO KEEP PACE WITH RAPID ECONOMIC CHANGES

The National Commission on Excellence in Education reported: "Our nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world . . . America's position in the world may once have been reasonably secure with only a few exceptionally well-trained men and women. It is no longer."

The U.S. economy has moved from one based primarily on manufacturing and agriculture to one more reliant on services and information. And Illinois is a microcosm of the nation.

Of the fastest growing occupations, 16 are in services, three are goods-producing and one is related to mining. In contrast, the list of the 20 fastest declining industries is dominated by manufacturing. And according to projections by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 75 percent of all jobs created between 1982 and 1995 will be in service industries.

The changing nature of the economy has implications for public schools, many of which are organized around an industrial model whose time is passing. If Illinois is to remain competitive, our workforce must be the best educated, the most trainable and the most agile ever produced by the public schools. Such dramatic changes require the development of closer ties between business and the schools.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS: BUILDING ALLIANCES WITH BUSINESS

To strengthen the ability of public schools to contribute more fully to Illinois' economic development and to build alliances and cooperative models between the business community and the schools, we offer these recommendations.

1. *We recommend CREATION OF AN EDUCATION AND BUSINESS DEPARTMENT within the office of the Illinois State Board of Education.* This department should be created

through the reallocation of *currently budgeted* funds. It should have the status and visibility necessary to deal with major Illinois corporations and should operate cooperatively with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs.

The Education and Business Department should determine ways in which the public schools can enhance economic development in Illinois. Among other things, it should publish and distribute a catalog of exemplary school/business partnerships in Illinois and other states; examine statutes and administrative rules which may prevent promising partnerships from developing, and recommend changes; conduct regional seminars for business executives and school officials to promote working relationships; notify businesses of tax benefits for donating equipment, personal services and other resources to public schools; establish technical teams to help local businesses and schools negotiate compacts; and integrate school/business compacts with ongoing projects under the federally-funded Job Training Partnership Act.

In addition, the Education and Business Department should act as a catalyst for a number of cooperative programs between schools and universities. Among these projects should be:

a) Business-Created Schools

In some communities, businesses and school officials have collaborated in the development of new or alternative schools. In those communities, business helped plan curricula, enlisted corporate support and provided jobs for students in an effort to enhance their occupational skills.

In 1975, the New York City Board of Education and the business community (The Downtown Lower Manhattan Association) created such a magnet school — the Murray Bergtraum High School for Business Careers. The school, which now serves 2,500 students, offers a rigorous educational option related to the real-life needs and opportunities of business.

Together, chief executive officers, managers and school personnel shaped a curriculum emphasizing accounting, marketing, legal studies, computer science and secretarial studies. The Association intervened successfully with state educational officials to permit greater use of non-accredited "teaching" personnel.

b) Business-Sponsored Teacher Institutes

Businesses should organize and run summer institutes for teachers. Such institutes could be an easy and cost-effective

way of retraining teachers and of introducing them to the concerns of the private sector. They are most effective when tailored to reflect local needs and when participants earn graduate credit through cooperating local colleges.

A variant of this program involves a partnership between the state and the business community. The state invests in updating the content of teacher-training courses, and in turn, local industries pay for the teacher institutes and the supporting materials.

c) Business Internships for Teachers

Businesses should hire more teachers during the summer months to provide them with first-hand learning experience about industry. In programs of this kind, teachers work in companies related to their academic or vocational specialization and receive the equivalent of their school salary from the company.

The Education and Business Department should provide the leadership in these activities. But actual cooperative programs should be developed by local school districts.

2. *We recommend therefore that each Superintendent of an Educational Service Region ESTABLISH A REGIONAL EDUCATION/BUSINESS PLANNING COUNCIL to consult with local schools in the development of cooperative programs between schools and businesses.* These councils, comprised of business people, school administrators, teachers and parents, could provide advice and resources to local school districts that might otherwise fail to develop joint ventures with the business community.

3. *We recommend that local school districts, in conjunction with the Regional Planning Councils, establish COMPACTS WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY.* The Boston Compact, a remarkable bargain between the schools and city businesses, illustrates the potential of cooperative efforts for Illinois. In a written agreement, the Boston schools agreed during each year of the Compact's life that the dropout rate would be reduced five percent annually and that all graduates would demonstrate the reading and math skills necessary for employment by 1986.

The business community agreed to recruit 200 companies to participate in the graduate hiring program; to place 400 qualified graduates in jobs by September 1983; to provide summer jobs for 1,000 students; and to increase by five percent each year the placement of graduates in local jobs.

Last October, the Compact was expanded to include over 20 Boston-area colleges and universities, which agreed by 1989 to increase by 25 percent the number of entering ninth graders admitted to area colleges. Furthermore, the higher education consortium agreed to help redesign the public schools' core curriculum and to develop and support a host of other programs to reduce the system's dropout rate (47 percent of Boston's entering ninth graders never graduate).

4. *We recommend that the General Assembly create the ILLINOIS EDUCATION VENTURE CAPITAL FUND to foster creative and innovative approaches to education.* The fund, with an initial appropriation of $500,000, should be administered by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Creativity sometimes requires seed money. The venture capital fund would involve the business community in fostering experimentation in education.

Creativity sometimes requires seed money. The venture capital fund would involve the business community in fostering experimentation in education. Just as IEDP grants encourage and reward districts willing to experiment, the venture capital fund expands and complements the IEDP program by providing additional money for those schools willing to undertake particularly bold and experimental approaches to education. Through the matching money provisions, moreover, this fund would forge a continuous relationship with the private sector by providing incentives for education officials to seek private support.

The following recommendation represents a potential project for funding by a venture capital fund.

Although merit pay for teachers involves substantial problems, merit pay for an entire school presents new and promising possibilities. The merit school idea could provide powerful incentives for school personnel to work together toward common goals.

5. *We recommend the creation of MERIT SCHOOLS under guidelines established by Regional Planning Councils.* Under the merit school program, regional councils would award cash grants to outstanding individual schools.

These programs would be funded by the Illinois Education Venture Capital Fund, primarily made up of tax-deductible business contributions. The program would be administered by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Although merit pay for teachers involves substantial problems, merit pay for an *entire school* presents new and promising possibilities. Under the merit school plan, schools would receive cash bonuses for distribution to *all* who had contributed to the schools' success. The thorny issue of individual teacher evaluations would be sidestepped in favor of a team concept that fosters an esprit-de-corps. The merit school idea could provide powerful incentives for school personnel to work together toward common goals.

RECONNECTING PEOPLE TO THEIR SCHOOLS

THE PROBLEM: DWINDLING SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Among the concepts central to the functioning of a free society, few are more important than the principle of the "public good." Simply defined, it means that certain services and functions are of such value to society that their cost must be borne by everyone regardless of whether or not we benefit from them. Police and fire departments, for example, benefit an entire community even though, if we are fortunate, we may personally never need such assistance.

Although education is still widely perceived as a public good, a number of factors have helped undermine this once unquestioned concept. Economic uncertainties, changing demographics and the rising costs of schools in the face of documented failings have all helped erode the public's confidence in our educational institutions.

Complicating this picture further is the fact that 78 percent of Illinois adults have no children in the public schools. Thus, fewer than one in four citizens has any immediate and direct contact with public education. It is doubtful that the concept of schools as a public good can be revived unless the 78 percent can be persuaded to join those who have children in the public schools in lending greater support to our educational institutions.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS: GIVING THE COMMUNITY A STAKE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

A. Improving Schools' Public Relations

Our challenge is to remind citizens of their stake in public schools. Therefore, we make the following recommendations.

1. *We recommend that the Illinois State Board of Education plan a STATEWIDE PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN stressing the theme "Everyone has a Stake in Public Education," with current funds reallocated for radio, TV and newspaper ads.*

2. *We recommend that the Illinois Association of School Boards and the Illinois Association of School Administrators develop a GUIDE FOR LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS ON COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS.* They should also conduct a series of statewide meetings at which school board members and administrators would be briefed on strategies and mechanics for establishing community outreach programs.

3. *We recommend that the Illinois Association of School Boards and the Illinois Association of School Administrators establish for local districts a "MODEL" POLICY STATEMENT which encourages extensive use of school facilities by the entire community.*

Local District Outreach Plans should present comprehensive and specific steps and activities the local district will take to win the support of the non-public school taxpayers of the community.

4. *We recommend that the Illinois State Board of Education require local districts to adopt OUTREACH PLANS to win the support of taxpayers without children in the public schools.* These plans, which would be monitored and evaluated by the ISBE, should present comprehensive and specific steps and activities the local district will take to win the support of the non-public school taxpayers of the community.

Because of their marketing and advertising expertise, businesses should be called upon to help develop these programs.

Students need to understand that with their right to an education comes a responsibility to the community which makes their education possible.

B. Fostering Personal Contact with the Community

Public relations campaigns and educational marketing strategies are necessary, but alone they will not rekindle the notion of education as a public good. Providing a first-rate education for children and spending tax dollars wisely are, of course, the best possible public relations. Underlying support for the public schools remains high, but the educator must tap that support, primarily through *personal contact.*

1. *We encourage school districts to adopt a STUDENT COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT as part of their curriculum programs.* Students need to understand that with their right to an education comes a responsibility to the community which makes their education possible. We recommend a requirement of one-half unit of community service for every high school student.[11]

2. *We recommend COMMUNITY OUTREACH AS A TEACHING ASSIGNMENT.* Rather than traditional study

hall and lunchroom assignments, teachers should be permitted to develop and supervise the community outreach programs of their schools.

3. *We recommend creation of COMMUNITY RESOURCE BANKS to assist schools in involving the larger community.* In such programs, schools would maintain an inventory of individuals with special skills, experiences, talent or knowledge. These individuals would be matched with students who are seeking special instruction and training, but may not know where to turn. Many adults would welcome the opportunity to share their knowledge and talents with young people. The educational experience of students would be enriched and the capabilities of the schools augmented. Such a program would bring many adults who have few opportunities to participate in school affairs into contact with the public schools.

4. *We recommend that the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce encourage businesses to voluntarily PROVIDE THEIR EMPLOYEES WITH SEVERAL HOURS OF PAID RELEASE TIME EACH MONTH TO ATTEND TO SCHOOL BUSINESS.* In addition, labor unions should introduce the concept into collective bargaining.

Greater parental involvement, we believe, is fundamental to better schools.

The Parent-Teacher-Student Learning Contract is tangible evidence to children that education is sufficiently important that their parents are willing to become involved.

5. *We recommend that the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) of Illinois and other educational organizations initiate a statewide effort to promote PARENT-TEACHER-STUDENT LEARNING CONTRACTS.* Developed by the National Committee for Citizens in Education, the learning contract recognizes in writing that successful teaching and learning are dependent on the fulfillment by each party of certain responsibilities.

These contracts are tailored to the unique circumstances of each child's educational needs. In addition to delineating basic responsibilities, the contract requires that all three parties work with one another in treating specific learning and behavioral problems.

Once negotiated and signed, the contract represents a partnership between home and school in support of the child — a partnership arrived at through dialogue and consultation be-

tween parents, teachers and students. It is tangible evidence to children that education is sufficiently important that their parents are willing to become involved.

With a scheduled reporting plan, parents and teachers can create a reward system based on students' fulfillment of their contractual duties.

6. *We recommend that the General Assembly create an EDUCATION BANK FOR ILLINOIS.* Under this proposal, 2.5 percent of the local property taxes paid by a property owner for the support of public education would be placed in an Individual Education Training Account (IETA) to be used for that person's education or training at any Illinois accredited institution.

To qualify to draw on "the education bank," a taxpayer would be required to be an Illinois resident and to have paid property taxes for five years. Withdrawals from the education bank would have to be applied toward schooling in an Illinois institution.

The total amount in the account would be matched by the education bank and could be used by the taxpayer, his or her spouse or the taxpayer's children for their college education or other post-secondary training. In addition, the bank could explore ways to provide loans at favorable interest rates for post-secondary education.[12]

The education bank is a new and promising idea. Illinois could break new ground by adopting this bold program which not only provides all property taxpayers with an incentive to support the public schools, but permits them to meet their own future educational needs. Such a fund could provide a partial solution to the enormous and costly retraining needs of a state workforce that must adapt to a changing economy. It would also offer assistance to students from both public and private schools in financing their college education. Most importantly, it could provide a powerful incentive for property taxpayers with no children currently in public schools to vote positively for more resources for those schools.

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FUNDING THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Comprehensive efforts to review the issue of school finance from both the revenue raising and distribution sides are already underway by other education-related groups. We do believe, however, that responsible policy recommendations ought to present information on the cost estimates of the recommendations as well as some direction as to where additional funds for the schools and the reforms proposed might be derived.

Cost of Recommendations:

Academic Scholarships	$1,000,000
Curriculum Planning Grants	$1,000,000
Quality Education Compensation Act	$200,000,000
Career Ladder Pilot School Grants	$125,000
Illinois Educational Leadership Academy	$310,000
Individual Educational Delivery Planning Grants	$2,500,000
Illinois Education Venture Capital Fund	$500,000
Education Bank	$60,000,000
Total Cost of Recommendations	$265,435,000

In Illinois, as in the nation, education is being squeezed from above by declining levels of funding support from the federal and state governments and pinched from below by the revolt of local taxpayers. Between 1979-83 federal funding to Illinois schools dropped by $95 million or 18 percent. This reduced the federal percentage of total spending on education from 10.23 percent to 5.50 percent over the same time period.

The percentage of direct total education funding from the state of Illinois has fallen from 48 percent in 1977 to just 38 percent currently. This decline reflects the decreasing priority of education within the Illinois budget. Education represented 26 percent of the entire state budget in 1978, but fell to 16 percent by 1984. Indeed, direct state expenditure for common school

education, on a per capita basis, was just $145 in 1984, less than all but five states in the nation. In addition to lagging in per capita expenditures, Illinois spends fewer actual dollars for education than such states as Alabama and Louisiana. When the declining overall public school population is combined with inflation, real per student revenues from the state have fallen by 20 percent in the last five years.

The Illinois Project for School Reform's survey of citizens' attitudes toward public education revealed a strong negative feeling about the property tax burden. This is further illustrated by the fact that two-thirds of local school referenda have failed in Illinois since 1977.

The Illinois Project for School Reform believes the soundest approach to providing adequate funding for schools is to move in a fiscally responsible manner toward a greater assumption of educational costs by the state. However, total assumption of school costs by the state could erode the important principle upon which this entire report rests — the revitalization of local control. Thus, localities should retain the capacity to contribute to the funding of their schools. We believe, therefore, that the state should provide between 50-55 percent of the cost of education.

Total assumption of school costs by the state could erode the important principle upon which this entire report rests — the revitalization of local control. Thus, localities should retain the capacity to contribute to the funding of their schools.

We offer two options for funding the recommendations in this report.

OPTION A — Increase the State Income Tax and Initiate Local Property Tax Relief.

Illinois is less reliant than the national average on the state income tax. Data from 1982 showed that for the entire U.S., the individual income tax provided 11.6 percent of total state and local tax collections, while in Illinois it made up only 10.2 percent. Although Illinois' corporate income tax *capacity* stands at 111 percent of the national average, the state's corporate income tax effort was measured at just 68.9 percent.[13]

The Illinois Project for School Reform recommends that the individual income tax rate be increased from 2.5 percent to 3.5 percent and the corporate income tax rate be increased from 4.0 percent to 5.6 percent effective January 1, 1986.

Such an increase would yield approximately $300 million that would be available to schools and an equal amount that would be available for property tax *relief*. The mechanism for providing this tax relief would need to be developed.

Estimates are that by 1990 such a process would place the state's share of education funding at 55 percent, the local share at 39 percent and the federal contribution at 6 percent.[14]

OPTION B — Select Revenue From These Sources:

1. Increase the state sales tax rate from 5 percent to 6 percent for one year.

Such an increase would yield $700 million. If approximately 25 percent was earmarked for the Common School Fund, an additional $175 million would be generated.

2. Broaden the sales tax base to include services in a limited way.

Based on 1981 data, the Governor's Task Force on Tax Reform estimated that expanding the sales tax base to include personal, automotive, amusement and miscellaneous services would increase sales tax revenues by 8 percent. Since current sales tax revenue is approximately $3 billion, eight percent would equal $240 million.

3. Increase the cigarette tax.

The recent decrease in the federal excise tax from 16 cents to 8 cents gives Illinois a viable option: substitute an additional 8 cent state tax on cigarettes in light of the reduction in the federal tax. This plan could generate approximately $290 million in revenues in 1985.

4. Increase education's share of the state lottery.

The single fastest growing revenue source in the state of Illinois is the lottery. Optimistic forecasts indicate that net lottery revenues will double by 1986. If education were to receive 50 percent of the additional revenue yield above the current $400 million per year, it could mean an additional $200 million per year in 1985 and 1986.

CONCLUSION

The Illinois Project for School Reform and the thousands of citizens who contributed to this agenda believe that our public schools should be the pride of Illinois — and the best in the nation.

If every recommendation offered in this report were enacted, the schools would still not be perfect. But they would be institutions with greater clarity of purpose; they would be imbued with the kind of energy and enthusiasm that results when people are free to test their creativity, experiment with new ideas and take risks.

The schools need more money — but that is not enough. As former Health, Education and Welfare Secretary, John Gardner, has said, "Education needs more than dollars. . . . We are not going to succeed . . . in solving the major problems facing us without substantial innovations. Without such innovation new billions poured into the system will simply strengthen and confirm outworn practices."

Our libraries are filled with unimplemented reports on how to improve the schools. If this report is to escape that fate, the energy of those citizens who helped write this document, as well as that of many others, will need to be organized and harnessed to assure that both our elected and appointed policymakers act to implement these recommendations.

Policymakers alone, however, cannot improve the schools. Equally important is the majority of our state's citizens who have no children in our public schools. Only when they recognize that the state's economic future and ultimately their own pocketbooks are affected by the quality of our public educational system will the reform debate turn into positive action.

Policymakers alone, however, cannot improve the schools. Equally important is the majority of our state's citizens who have no children in our public schools. Only when they recognize that the state's economic future and ultimately their own pocketbooks are affected by the quality of our public educational system will the reform debate turn into positive action.

And for those citizens whose children do attend our public schools, the reality is that no recommendations for school reform can substitute for that most important ingredient which guarantees school quality — parental interest, concern and involvement in a child's education.

If we succeed in improving our schools now, there is every likelihood that the citizens of Illinois will be called upon to do so again, for institutional renewal is the task of every generation. Our generation has the unique opportunity to live in a time of profound economic change. We must seize the opportunity which is ours to make the public schools the foundation of a new Illinois.

FOOTNOTES

1. From the Education Commission of the States' Task Force on Education for Economic Growth.

2. Illinois' current high school requirements are: 4 years of physical education; 3 years of English; 2 years of mathematics; 2 years of social science; 1 year of science; 1 year of *either* art, music, vocational education or foreign language; 1 semester of driver's education; and 1 semester of health. The following units of instruction must also be offered within a curriculum, but can be integrated with related subject areas: U.S. history; consumer education; safety education; career education; U.S. and State Constitution; government; truth, honesty and morality; metric education; and humane treatment of animals.

3. Developed by business representatives on the Education Commission of the States' Task Force on Education for Economic Growth.

4. Other recommendations in this report address the need for special time availability for remedial and tutorial work for students with academic deficiencies. See also the recommendations for programs which might be utilized in the summer months — extension of teachers' contracts and the establishment of Before and After School Centers.

5. Currently, the minimum statutory salary requirement for beginning teachers is $10,000. According to the Teacher Service Record for 1983-84, the statewide average for beginning teachers was $14,780 and the statewide average for full-time teachers, K-12 was $24,211.

6. School districts should be selected by the Illinois State Board of Education in consultation with the Illinois Education Association and the Illinois Federation of Teachers.

7. Located in the state capital at Sangamon State University, the academy would be organized and administered by a governing board consisting of the president of the Illinois Education Association; the president of the Illinois Federation of Teachers; the executive director of the Illinois Associ-

ation of School Administrators; the executive director of the Illinois Association of School Boards; the State Superintendent of Education; the president of the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools; the executive director of the Illinois State Board of Higher Education; the president of Sangamon State University; and the president of the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce.

Academy guidelines and operation policies would be established by the governing board with funding derived from three sources:

a) Voluntary contributions from university colleges of education and school districts based on a formula of $.25 per full-time student enrolled. Only those providing financial contributions could participate in the academy and its activities.

b) Matching appropriations from the General Assembly.

c) Grants from foundations and private corporations.

Teachers and administrators would be selected to attend the academy on the basis of guidelines established by the governing board. Some would be given full-year grants or shorter-term stipends. The number of individuals a district or college could enroll would be based on a formula related to a school district's enrollment and financial contribution.

8. The members would be the deans of the schools of education, regional superintendents, and district teachers, administrators and school board members.

9. This recommendation, like others in this report, emphasizes the significant role which superintendents of the educational service regions should play in delivering quality education.

10. The governor; the state superintendent of education; the executive director of the Illinois State Board of Higher Education; the executive director of the Community College Board; the president of the Illinois Education Association; the president of the Illinois Federation of Teachers; the executive director of the Illinois Association of School Administrators; the executive director of the Illinois Association of School Boards; the president of the Illinois Asso-

ciation of Regional Superintendents of Schools; the director of the Bureau of the Budget; and the state president of the Illinois Parent Teacher Association.

The effectiveness of this council would decrease if surrogates participated in lieu of the actual heads of the organizations listed above.

11. The nature of their service could be determined by a community school coordinating council comprised of students, teachers, administrators, school board members and community representatives. Assisting senior citizens and working at day-care centers are some potential projects.

12. Here's how a typical formula might work:

    a) Five-year resident x $2,000 per year in taxes = $10,000.

    b) Approximately 60 percent of property taxes go to education = $6,000.

    c) 2.5 percent of $6,000 would be credited to the taxpayer's IETA. Thus, $150 would be saved in 5 years and $450 in 15 years.

    d) The matching grant from the education bank would bring the total amount to $900.

13. From the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, *Tax Capacity of the Fifty States*, 1982.

14. These estimates are based on figures provided by the Illinois Office of the Comptroller.

APPENDICES

THE PROCESS

The recommendations in this report are the result of a large-scale process that involved over 3,000 Illinois citizens from every corner of the state. Ninety citizens' committees were formed, representing men and women from every walk of life. State legislators from both political parties were asked to chair these committees, to lead discussions on the principal issues identified by the project and to develop policy recommendations.

The more than 500 people who attended three regional conferences in the fall of 1984 (held in Evanston, Springfield and Mt. Vernon) explored policy options and formulated recommendations. The first draft of this report was sent to all committee members in January 1985 for their review and suggested revisions.

These citizens and public officials deserve the gratitude of the entire state for their time and effort. Their unselfish participation is testimony to the fact that citizens are concerned about the quality of our schools.

The project also was generously assisted by the professional education community in Illinois and in the nation. A statewide advisory committee representing the state's major educational, civic, labor and governmental agencies helped guide the project from its inception, including a critical review of the final recommendations. Advisory committees comprised of the deans of Illinois-based colleges of education and district school superintendents made important contributions to the process. Several nationally recognized educators also assisted by providing a broader perspective. In addition, the project conducted a statewide opinion poll to measure citizens' attitudes about public education.

These recommendations, therefore, are a composite of the most promising ideas and hopes generated by a complex consultative process. Bringing these ideas into a cohesive document has not been easy, for literally hundreds of recommendations were proposed. Some individuals will undoubtedly be disappointed that their specific ideas are not reflected in this report, and others may disagree with the final recommendations. However, the involvement of thousands of citizens in a grassroots policy formation process on a topic as controversial as public education was never expected to result in unanimity.

Still, most of the recommendations are the direct result of the multiple input process, and the specific ideas can be traced back to one or more of the participating groups, committees or individuals. In some cases, proposals which were too general in nature were specifically detailed by the drafting committee. In these cases, however, the intent and spirit of the original recommendations were honored.

The recommendations attempt to strike a balance between being so general, as to be meaningless, and being too specific so as to rule out local administrative discretion and flexibility.

The thrust of the recommendations and the concepts upon which they are based are most important. Time, dates, numbers and dollars are all subject to change, compromise and revision that are part of policymaking when ideas begin the journey that makes them reality.

Some of our proposals require state legislative approval and we hope to see action on them in 1985. Others, however, can be acted on immediately by local and regional school authorities and do not require legislative approval.

Everything in this report has been offered with one goal in mind — to improve the quality of our schools so that we are better prepared to meet the economic challenges of a new Illinois.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS

We would like to thank those who have provided us with financial support: Abbott Laboratories; Amoco Foundation; Baird & Warner; William Blair & Company; Blue Cross/Blue Shield; Chicago Community Trust; Chicago United; Gaylord Donnelley Foundation; Field Foundation of Illinois; Forest Fund; GATX Corporation; Harza Engineering Company; Household International; IBM; Interstate United; Joyce Foundation; Leslie Fund; Marsh & McLennan, Inc.; Material Service Corporation; Motorola, Inc.; National Boulevard Bank of Chicago; Newark Electronics; Rand McNally & Company; Roosevelt Center for American Policy Studies; Sargent-Welch Scientific Company; Sears, Roebuck & Company; Signode Corporation; United Airlines; Urban Investment and Development Company; Walgreen Company; Willett, Inc.; Woods Charitable Fund.

We are grateful to everyone for their generous assistance.

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NOTES

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CHICAGO UNITED

Chicago United is a consortium of leading black, white and Hispanic business executives and professional people dedicated to the improvement of the socio-economic environment of metropolitan Chicago. It is a vehicle for maintaining open communication between minority communities and major businesses. It provides a forum for the discussion of problems and the development of solutions to those problems. Definitive action on specific business and social issues is made possible by utilization of the combined determination, resources and influence of Chicago United members.

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